

Perceived Treatment Efficacy for Conventional and Alternative Therapies Reported by Persons with Multiple Chemical Sensitivity

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Key words: multiple chemical sensitivity, chemical injury, environmental sensitivity, environmental illness, chemical hypersensitivity, environmental allergy

Abbreviations used:

MCS: Multiple Chemical Sensitivity is a condition where persons experience negative health effects in multiple organ systems from exposure to low levels of common chemicals. Although symptoms experienced from particular chemicals vary across persons, they are generally stable within persons. The sensitivities often spread over time first to related chemicals and then to other classes of chemicals.

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Outline

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Abstract

This study examined self-reported perceived treatment efficacy of 101 treatments used by 917 persons with self-reported multiple chemical sensitivity. Treatments examined included environmental medicine techniques, holistic therapies, individual nutritional supplements, detoxification techniques, body therapies, Eastern origin techniques, "newer" therapies, prescription items, and others. The three most highly rated treatments were creating a chemical-free living space, chemical avoidance, and prayer. Both creating a chemical free living space and chemical avoidance were rated by 95% of people as helpful. Results for most therapies were mixed. Participants had consulted a mean of 12 health care providers and spent over one-third of their annual income on health care costs. We discuss this drain on personal resources and describe respondents' attitudes toward the possibility of healing from MCS.